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AN
ANSWER
TO THE
DISCOURSE

Which carried the
Præmium at the Academy of DIJON;

On the QUESTION,
*Whether the Re-establishment of Arts and Sciences
bath contributed to the Refinement of Manners?*

By Monsieur GUATIER,
*Professor of Mathematicks and of History, and Fellow of the
Royal Academy of Belles-Lettres, at Nancy.*

To which are added,
OBSERVATIONS
On the above
ANSWER to that DISCOURSE.

By JOHN-JAMES ROUSSEAU,
Citizen of Geneva, Author of the DISCOURSE.

Translated from the FRENCH ORIGINALS.

D U B L I N :

Printed by RICHARD JAMES, at *Newton's Head*
in *Dame-street*.

[Price One British Shilling.]

A. N. S. W. E.

D. I. S. C. O. U. R. S. E.

Principles of the Law of Evidence

On the Question of the Admissibility of Evidence

By J. H. W. S. J.

OBSERVATIONS



Answer

By J. H. W. S. J.

Printed from the Press of the British Museum

D. U. B. I. T.

Printed by Richard James, at the British Museum Press

[Price One Penny]

The Translator's PREFACE.

IT may reasonably be thought, that the author of the discourse which occasioned those papers we now present a translation of to the publick, did not imagine he was cutting out for himself so much employment as he finds he did.

Its having been delivered as an academical exercise, may be the reason that it should be look'd upon by many readers, rather as an endeavour to excel on a disputable point, than as a declaration of his real sentiments; and his displaying so large a share of reading and reflection in his handling the subject, might very well persuade them to that opinion: For the person who discovers himself to be possesst of real learning, that is, an improvement of natural talents, by study and contemplation, must be supposed to have taken pleasure in the pursuit of it; and if this pleasure did, with him, arise to a satiety, it doth not seem to correspond with the frankness and ingenuity he every where discovers, to discourage his neighbours from taking a taste.

I have no other motive to write this preface, than that it may be expected, one who attempted the translation of both pieces,
may

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may be thought to have looked with more attention into the performance, than is done by the generality of readers, and that it may be expected from such a person, that he would offer something of his own thoughts. Such I am willing to gratify, not on a presumption that there is any occasion to rouse their attention ; the question is itself sufficient for that ; and as they will find it discussed on both sides with such elegance and politeness, such clearness and adherence to the point, such candour and mutual esteem between the antagonists, that were the following pieces valuable on no other account, they must be for this, that they are perfect models for a literary debate, and shew that there is a great deal of difference between a dispute and a quarrel, which is a thing not so clearly to be discovered on many the like occasions. All I shall therefore attempt, is, only to give the reader one single precaution, which is, that he may bear in mind, that the author of the discourse shews himself very far from being a foe to knowledge, altho' he declares against the long detail of sciences, which appropriates to itself the name of learning.

Knowledge, according to him, is contained within small compass ; and he is right : for that which exceeds the reach or capacity of ordinary men, is but parade and shew, or at best uncertainty. The wisest men who
have

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have made it the object of their enquiry, from *Solomon*, down to *Rousseau*, have owned themselves dissatisfied with their success, and have pronounc'd it vanity. The speech of the peasant to *Democritus*, who retired for contemplation to the tombs of *Abdera*, was worthy of being recorded---“What are “you about *Democritus*? It is not for “man to contrive worlds, but to cultivate “them.” But, withal, the cultivation of the earth, which, no doubt, this peasant was skill'd in, required some art and experience, tho' not so much as to need a prospect of skulls and bones to extend his imagination, and to set his ideas on the wing.

Brutal, savage ignorance benefits nothing by the present controversy, altho' the sciences be left to take their fate; and it must give pleasure, to see with what spirit and address their insufficiencies have been shewn, in the presence of some of their most powerful advocates.

It requires no very extraordinary conversation with books, to know, that knowledge is one thing, and that what is given us for learning, is absolutely another. Doctor *Samuel Clark*, in the preface to his edition of *Homer*, says, that prosody is a thing which youth should be made acquainted with. And monsieur *Bayle* says, somewhere, of logick, that it is what we ought to know, that we may

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may be on our guard against false reasoning. These were both of them, men of great natural parts, and great acquirements; yet shall we on the authority of the one, employ our youth in the study of that which we would be ashamed to practice when we are men; and of the other, to attach ourselves to that which hath been the foundation of all the sophisticated reasonings that ever was in the world? *Rapin* the Jesuit, says of the analyticks of *Aristotle*, that they are of themselves sufficient to confound all the heresies that ever gave disturbance to the church. It is very probable, that his church had never met with these disturbances, if it had had the same reliance on the Bible.

I can imagine no better cause to be assigned, wherefore the antients so far excel the moderns in works of genius of every kind, than the difference in the manner of education; and I believe there are few men of genius and learning, (not confined to some particular profession) who would not wish that their younger days had been passed in other kind of discipline. What *Matt. Prior*, pleasantly stiles *Busby's* Goe-cart, is not easily to be got free of, when it is once clasped about one, and they continue to walk on as if the trammels were still at their heels. No one, I believe, will deny but that *Milton* and *Dryden*

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den were geniuses-----tho' *Dryden* has deviated from every rule of criticism, yet it is plain, he would have been a better poet, had he never read one of the criticks; for there is not any absurdity which he labours to vindicate, in his many voluminous prefaces and dedications, wherein he hath not one or other of these gentlemen on his side: *Milton's* failing, and the occasion of it, hath been pointed out more than once by much abler hands.

In the present debate, both writers have discreetly avoided, as much as was well possible, bringing religion into the question; and this reserve is very much to be approved; for if learning, or the opinions of learned men, had much connexion with it, the sincere professors of it, would often be in great perplexities, and find authorities from the most approved writers, for very opposite tennets, even in things which do not lie properly within the sphere of controversy. It may be thought odd, that a writer of the first age after the apostles, should deem *Socrates* and *Heraclitus* christians; and one of the age immediately preceding our own, in a kind of rapture, pray to *Socrates* as a saint; yet we see one learned divine upbraid another, and tell him that he did not think of what he was saying, when he said, that the earl of *Strafford* bore his misfortunes like a christian; and goes about to
dispute

viii The Translator's PREFACE.

dispute the point with him, whether he was a christian or no : But in matters of this kind, learning is not in question.

Knowledge is, and ever will be, the aim of every thinking man : Through the perpetual activity of his mind, it is what he cannot well avoid ; and it is earnestly to be wished, that the avenues to it were not so strongly bar-caded ; that so many obstacles under the name of sciences should stand in the way of it, is to be lamented, and the more so, because it seems to be without a remedy.



A N
A N S W E R
T O T H E
D I S C O U R S E
Which Carried the
P R Æ M I U M
A T T H E
A C A D E M Y of *DIJON*;
On the Q U E S T I O N,

*Whether the Re-establishment of Arts and
Sciences hath contributed to the Refinement of
Manners? By a Citizen of Geneva.*

By Monsieur G U A T I E R,
*Professor of Mathematicks and History, and Fellow of
the Royal Academy of Belles-Letters at Nancy.*

Translated from the F R E N C H.

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A. N. S. W. E. R.

TO THE

DISCOURSE

Which

PRÆMIUM

AT THE

Academy of Dijon;

On the QUESTION,

Whether the Republic of Geneva be a true Republic, or a mere Democracy.



By William Hall, Esq.,
Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy,
in the Royal Academy of Sciences at Nancy.

Translated from the French.

DUBLIN:
Printed by Richard Jackson, at Watson's Head
in Queen's Street.

A N
A N S W E R
TO THE
D I S C O U R S E

Which carried the PRÆMIUM

At the ACADEMY of *DIJON*.

THE discourse of the Citizen of *Geneva*, hath in it something surprizing; and it is also surprizing to think, that it should be crowned by so celebrated an Academy.

Is it really his particular opinion, which the Author would establish? Or, is it only a paradox, with which he would amuse the publick? Whatever it be, to overthrow his opinion, we have only to examine his proofs, to place the author in one view with the sentiments he hath adopted, and set himself in opposition to himself. May I not in arguing on his principles, overcome him with his own weapons, and give him a triumph in his own defeat!

His

His manner of thinking declares a virtuous heart: His way of writing discovers an improved mind: But if in him knowledge and virtue be really united, and that the one (as he labours to prove) be incompatible with the other; how is it that his learning hath not corrupted his wisdom? Or, how cometh it to pass that his wisdom hath not determined him to remain in ignorance? Hath he given virtue the preference to science? Why then doth he display with so much affectation an erudition so extended and so deep? Again, hath he preferred science to virtue? Wherefore then doth he preach up with so much eloquence the latter to the prejudice of the former? Let him begin with reconciling such singular contradictions, before he declares himself against received opinions; before he attacks others, let him agree a truce with himself.

But hath he only designed to exercise his wit, and to shew his imagination in full lustre? Let us not, then, envy the frivolous advantage of his success. But what shall we conclude, in this case, from his discourse? The same which we conclude after reading an ingenious romance; in vain the author bestows
on

on his fables the varnish of truth, we very well see that he gives not credit to that which he would impose on the belief of others.

As for me, who flatter not myself with having a capacity for learning, so much as to injure my morals; nor virtue enough to do any great honour to my ignorance; in exerting myself against an opinion so little to be supported, I have no other interest than the sustaining that of truth. The author shall find an impartial antagonist in me; I will even endeavour to recommend myself to him by this opposition; all my efforts in this contest having no other intent than to reconcile his genius to his heart, and to obtain for myself the satisfaction to see reconciled in his mind, the sciences which I admire, to that virtue which I love.

P A R T I.

THE sciences give us to know, the *true*, the *good*, the *useful*, in every kind: Precious knowledge! which, as it enlightens the mind, must naturally contribute to the refinement of the manners.

The truth of this proposition needs only to be presented to be believed, so I shall not
delay

delay myself with proving it. I shall only employ myself in refuting the ingenious sophisms used by him, who dares to attack it.

In the setting out of his discourse, the author displays the most beautiful sight to our view. He represents man to us, at variance, as we may say, with himself, rising in some sort from the nothing of his ignorance; dispersing, by the efforts of his reason, that darkness in which nature had envelop'd him. Exalting himself by his understanding, to the highest spheres of the celestial regions; subjecting the motions of the stars to his calculations; measuring with his compass the vast extent of the universe: Entering again into his own heart, and accounting with himself concerning the nature of his soul, of its excellence, and of its high destination.

How much to the honour of the sciences is such a confession, extorted by the force of truth! How clearly it shews, their necessity and their advantages! What pain must it have cost the author to make it, and how much more to retract it!

Nature, saith he, is beautiful enough in herself, she cannot but suffer in being adorned;
ed:

ed; happy are the men, adds he, who know how to profit by her gifts, without prying into them. It is to the simplicity of their minds, that they owe the innocence of their manners. A pretty moral we have here from this censor of the sciences, and apologist of morals! Who would have thought that the like reflection could have proceeded from the principles he had just now established?

Nature is beautiful in herself, no doubt; but is it not in the discovering of her beauties, in penetrating her secrets, in unvailing her operations, that the learned employ their enquiries? Wherefore is so large a field opened to our view. Should the understanding, fitted to explore it, and which obtains, in this exercise, so worthy of its activity, more strength and greater extent, confine itself to some slight perceptions, or to a stupid admiration? Shall the manners be less pure, because the reason is more enlightened? And according as the lamp which is given to be our guide, encreases in light, shall our way be less easy to find, and more hard to be kept? To what purpose were all those gifts, which the Creator bestowed on man, if confined to the offices of the organs of sense,

sense, he shall have power only to examine that which he sees, reflect on that which he hears, discern by the smell the connection he hath with objects, supply the defect of sight by feeling, and judge by the taste of what may be hurtful or advantageous to him? Without reason which enlightens and directs us, confounded with the beasts, govern'd by instinct, should we not very soon become as like to them by our actions, as we are already by our wants? It is only by the assistance of study and reflection that we are enabled to regulate the uses of those sensible things, which are within our reach, to correct the errors of our sense, to bring the body under subjection to the mind; to conduct the soul, that substance spiritual and immortal, to the knowledge of its duty and of its end.

As it is chiefly by their effect on the manners that the author attacks and decries the sciences; to vindicate them from so false an imputation, I have only in this place, to relate the advantages for which society is indebted to them; but who can enumerate the infinite number they bring to it, and the numberless embellishments they give it. The more they are cultivated in a state, the more
that

that state flourishes ; all things languish without them.

How much is the artizan indebted to them for the beauty, the solidity, the proportion, the perfection of his work ; the labourer for the various ways of compelling the earth to pay to his endeavours that tribute he requires ; the physician, to discover the nature of diseases, and the propriety of medicines ; the lawyer to discern the spirit of the laws, and the diversity of duties ; the judge to distinguish the artifices of fraud, from the simplicity of innocence, and to decide with justice concerning the lives and properties of men ? Every citizen of what profession, of what condition soever he be, hath certain duties to fulfil ; and how fulfil them, and not know them ?

That curiosity natural to man, inspires him with a desire to learn : His occasions make him feel the necessity ; his employments impose on him the obligation ; and his progress makes him taste the pleasure ; his first discoveries encrease his appetite for knowledge ; the more he knows, the more he finds that he hath knowledge to acquire ; and the more knowledge we acquire, we do well with the greater facility.

The citizen of *Geneva*, hath he not experienced this? Let us be shy of trusting to his modesty. He would have it, that we should be more virtuous, were we less knowing. It is by the sciences, saith he, that we know evil; how many crimes, saith he, would we be ignorant of, were it not for them! But ignorance of vice, is that virtue? Is it *doing* well, to be ignorant of ill? and to abstain from evil because we are ignorant of it, is that what he would call virtue? He will admit at least, that this virtue is not greatly meritorious; surely it runs the hazard of not being long so; it is only to be so, 'till some occasion shall rouse the sleeping passions. It represents to me an *Hector*, who makes a show of his courage, when there is no enemy in his way; should an enemy appear, ought he to prepare for his defence, his courage fails, his virtue vanishes.

If the Sciences shew us evil they shew us also the remedy. A skillful botanist knows how to distinguish the wholesome plants from the poisonous; whereas the vulgar, equally ignorant of the virtues of the one or the poisons of the other, trample on all without distinction, or gather them all without choice.

A man enlightened by the sciences, distinguishes in the multiplicity of objects that present themselves to his understanding, those which are to be rejected, and those which are to be sought for. He finds in the deformity of vice, and in the trouble which attends it, in the charms of virtue, and in the peace which accompanies it, wherewith to fix his relish and esteem for the one, his horror and contempt for the other; he is wise on choice, he is solidly virtuous.

But, say they, there are countries where, without science, without study, without having a detail of moral principles, they practise them better than where they are more known, more praised, and more exactly taught. Without examining, here, with rigour, those parallels so often made of our morals with those of the antients, or of strangers; hateful parallels! where is to be discerned less zeal and equity, than envy to our country men, and humour against our cotemporaries: Is it not to the climate, to the temperament, to the want of opportunity, to fault of the object, to the œconomy of government, to customs, to laws, to any other cause, than to the sciences, that ought to be attributed this difference
which

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which we some times observe in the manners of different times, and different countries? To be ever dinning us with primitive simplicity, which they so highly extol, representing it ever as the inseparable companion of innocence, is not this to delude us with a picture in idea? When was mankind ever known to be without fault, without desires, without passions? Do we not at all times carry about us the seeds of vices? And if there have been times, if there be still climates where particular crimes are unknown, may there not be other disorders? May there not be those, still more monstrous among those people whose stupidity is so much boasted? Because gold tempts not their avarice, because honours excite not their ambition, are they the less acquainted with pride and injustice? Are they the less given to the meanness of envy, less hurried by anger to revenge; are their grosser senses less capable of the attractions of pleasure? And to what excesses will not a voluptuary be carried, who hath no rule, who knows no bridle? But when even in those savage countries, there may be fewer crimes than in countries more disciplined, are there to be found the like virtues? Are there to be discovered those sublime virtues, that purity

rity of manners, that magnanimous self-denial, those actions more than human which are the product of religion.

So many great men who have defended it with their writings, who have adorned it by their actions; have they not obtained through study, those superior lights which have triumphed over error and vice? It is false wit, presuming ignorance, which have hatched doubts and prejudices; it is pride, it is obstinacy, which produce schisms and heresies; it is pyrrhonism, it is unbelief which favour independancy, revolt, the passions, all misdoings, adversaries like these do honour to religion: to overcome them she hath only to appear; she fears nothing so much as the not being fully known: She hath only to be examined to become respected; she is beloved in proportion as she hath been enquired into, as soon as she is known; new motives are discovered to believe her, and new means to put her in practice. The more a christian examines the firmness of his title, the more he will be assured of the possession of his belief; the more he studies revelation, the more he will fortify himself in faith. It is in the divine writings that he discovers the origine and excel-

excellence of it; it is in the learned writings of the fathers of the church, that he follows it, unfolding it from age to age; it is in books of piety and the holy annals, that he finds examples, and matter for application.

What! Shall ignorance ravish from religion and virtue such powerful supports; and shall it be, that a doctor of *Geneva*, shall openly teach that irregularity of manners is owing to these. We would be more astonished to hear so strange a paradox, if we did not know that the singularity of a system, how dangerous soever it be, is but a further reason to have no other rule but a particular turn of mind. The study of religion is, to all men, the most infallible rule of morals. I say more: The study, even of nature, contributes to elevate the sentiments, to regulate the conduct; it leads naturally to the admiration, to the love, to the gratitude, to the submission which every rational soul feels to be due to the Almighty. In the regular course of those immeasurable globes which roul over our heads, the astronomer discovers an infinite power; in the exact proportion of all the parts which compose this universe, the geometrer perceives the effect of boundless wisdom;

wisdom; in the succession of seasons, the links of causes to effects, the vegetation of plants, the organization of animals, the constant uniformity and astonishing variety of the different appearances in nature, the naturalist cannot mistake the author, the preserver, the ruler and the master.

From these reflections, the true philosopher proceeds to practical consequences, and entering into himself, after having sought in vain thro' all the objects which surround him, for that perfect happiness, he without ceasing pants after, and finding nothing here below that answers to his boundless desires, he sees that he is intended for something more great than any thing created; he naturally turns towards his first cause and final end: Happy, if attentive to the call of grace, he learns to seek no felicity but in the fruition of his God!

PART II.

THE anonymous author, gives here an instance in himself, of the ill use which may be made of learning, and of the influence it may have on prejudiced minds; he proceeds to search in the remotest ages, he goes

goes back to the highest antiquity; he wastes himself in reasonings and researches, to find out suffrages to maintain his opinion; he cites evidence, who attribute to the arts and sciences, the decay of kingdoms and of empires; he imputes to the learned and to artists, that sloath and luxury which are the common sources of the most strange revolutions.

But *Egypt*, *Greece*, the common-wealth of *Rome*, the *Chinese* empire, which he hath ventured to call as evidences in favour of ignorance, to the affront of science, and to the prejudice of morals, should have brought to his remembrance, those renowned legislators, who have illuminated by the extent of their lights, and regulated by the wisdom of their laws, those mighty states, of which they laid the first foundation; those celebrated orators, who have supported them, when on the brink of their ruin, by the victorious power of their sublime eloquence. Those philosophers, those sages, who by their learned writings, have made their country illustrious, and their own names immortal.

What a crowd of shining examples might I not oppose to the small number of authors
he

he hath quoted. I have only to open the annals of the world----By how many incontestible witnesses, august monuments, immortal works, doth not history attest, that the sciences have every where contributed to the benefit of mankind, to the glory of empires, and to the triumph of virtue.

No, it is not owing to the sciences, it is from the bosom of wealth, that sloath and luxury have their birth. Riches are seldom found to be the portion of the learned: For one *Plato* in opulence, for one *Aristippus* respected at court, how many philosophers are reduced to a cloak and a wallet; wrapt up in their own virtue, and unknown in their solitude! How many *Homers* and *Diogenes's*, *Epicteuses* and *Æsops* in want! The learned have neither the leizure nor the relish to heap up great riches: They love study, they live in meanness; and a life, laborious and moderate, passed in the silence of retreat, employed in labour and study, certainly is not voluptuous and criminal. The conveniencies of life, tho' commonly the fruit of arts, are never the more the share of the artists; they labour entirely for the rich, and it is the lazy rich, who profit by, and abuse the fruit of their industry.

C

The

The most boasted effect of the arts and sciences, continues the author, is that politeness introduced amongst men, which he is pleased to confound with artifice and hypocrisy. Politeness, according to him, serves only as a cover for defects, and a mask for vices. Would he then have vice appear barefaced, indecency joined to disorder, and scandal to crimes? When, in truth, were this politeness of manners but a refinement on self-love, a shade over our own weaknesses, would it not be more for the advantage of society, that the vicious should not dare to shew himself such as he is, and that he was forced to borrow the livery of decency and modesty? It hath been said, and it is true, hypocrisy, odious as it is in itself, is however, an homage which vice pays to virtue; it preserves, at least, weak minds from the contagion of bad example.

But it shews little acquaintance with the learned, to impute to them the credit which this pretended politeness, now taxed with dissimulation, hath gained in the world: One may be polite without being a dissembler; and one may be both the one and the other without being learned; and still it is more common to be very learned without being very polite.

The

The love of solitude, a taste for books, the little desire to appear in what they call the *beau-monde*, the want of qualification to present themselves with grace, the hopes to please or be agreeable there, the fatigue inseparable from trifling conversations, almost insupportable to minds accustomed to think, all concur to render these assemblies as strange to the learned man, as he is to them. What figure would he make in visits? Behold him in his pensive mood, absent in thought, his mind engaged, his expressions studied, his sententious discourse, his utter ignorance of the mode and most usual fashion, presently by the ridicule which he brings and which he finds, by the constraint which he suffers, and which he causes, he wearies, and is wearied; he parts ill satisfied, and all are content that he is gone. He inwardly censures those he leaves, and they heartily laugh when he is gone; whilst he mourns their vices, they make merry with his defects. But these defects, when all is said, have little to do with morals; and it is to those defects, perhaps, that more than one learned man is indebted, that he is not as bad as those who criticize on him.

But

But before the reign of sciences and arts, there were, adds the author, empires more extended, conquests more rapid, warriors more famous. If he had spoke less like an orator, and more like a philosopher, he would have said, that at that time appeared in the world, those daring men, who hurried by violent passions, leading in their train crowds of slaves, went on invading peaceable countries, subduing nations ignorant in the art of war, enslaving countries where arts had raised no banner against their sudden incursions; their valour was wild, their courage was cruelty, their conquests were inhuman; they were as impetuous torrents which made by so much the more ravage, as they met with the less resistance: Thus, no sooner were they gone, but no track remained but that of their fury; no form of government, no law, no order, no tie to hold or to unite the conquered people.

Let us compare to those times of ignorance and barbarism, those happy ages, when the sciences have expanded throughout a spirit of order and justice. In our times we see wars, less frequent and more just; actions less astonishing, but more heroick; victories less bloody,

bloody, but more glorious; conquests less sudden, but more assured; warriors less violent but more dreaded: knowing how to conquer with moderation; treating the conquered with humanity; honour is their guide, glory is their reward. Notwithstanding, saith the author, a great difference may be observed in wars, carried on by a people who are poor, and therefore stiled barbarous; and a people who are rich, and therefore esteemed polite. It is plain that the citizen of *Geneva* hath never been in the humour to take a near prospect of what happens in battles. Wherein is it surprizing that barbarians should act with less caution, and expose themselves with less reserve? Let them conquer or be conquered, they cannot but be gainers if they survive their defeats. But that which the hope of a mean interest, or rather that which brutal despair inspires in men of blood; sentiment, duty excites in generous minds, who devote themselves for their country; with this difference, which the author might not observe, that the valour of the latter is more cool, more deliberate, more moderate, more knowingly conducted, and of consequence always more sure of success.

But,

But, at length, *Socrates*, the famous *Socrates*, did himself cry out against the sciences, in his time. Are we to be surprized at that? The insufferable pride of the *Stoicks*, the effeminate sloath of the *Epicureans*, the absurd reasonings of the *Pyrronians*; an humour of wrangling, idle subtilties, errors without number, monstrous vices, at that time infected philosophy and dishonoured the philosophers. It was the abuse of the sciences, not the sciences themselves, which this great man condemned, and which we condemn after him. But the abuse of any thing, ever supposes that good use may be made of it: For what is there which may not be abused? And because an author, for example, to defend a bad cause, shall make an ill use of the fecundity of his wit and the readiness of his pen, shall he therefore be restrained from the use of them on another occasion, and on other subjects more worthy of his genius? To make amends for a fit of intemperance, must we root up all the vines? Ebriety of mind hath led some learned men into strange wanderings; I grant it, and I am sorry for it. By the talk of some, and by the writings of others, religion hath degenerated into hypocrisy, piety into superstition, divinity into error,

error, law into chicane, astronomy into judicial astrology, physick into atheism: The mind of man, become the tennis-ball of whim and prejudice; bent upon absurd systems, obstinate in absurd opinions, into what excursions is it not led, when given up to a presuming curiosity? It would over-leap those bounds prescribed to it by the Hand which limited the sea. But in vain the bellowing waves swell themselves and drive with fury against the opposing shore, constrained suddenly to give back upon themselves, they return to the bosom of the ocean, and leave upon the coast but a light froth which instantly disappears, or a floating sand, which flies from under our steps.

True image of the vain efforts of the mind, when heated by the quick sallies of a strong imagination; suffering itself to be carried away by every wind of doctrine, it attempts to raise itself with an audacious flight beyond its sphere, and would penetrate that which is not intended for it's comprehension.

But the sciences, far from authorising such excesses, are full of maxims which reprove them; and the really learned, whose eye never

ver wanders from the light of revelation; who always follows the infallible guide of legitimate authority, advances with large steps in the career of science, makes himself of use to society, an honour to his country, begins his course with innocence, and ends it with glory.



OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

A N S W E R

T O A

D I S C O U R S E

ON THE

QUESTION,

*Whether the Re-establishment of ARTS
and SCIENCES has contributed to
the refining of Manners?*

By JOHN-JAMES ROUSSEAU,
Citizen of Geneva, Author of the DISCOURSE.

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ON THE

ANSWER

TO A

DISCOURSE

ON THE

QUESTION

Whether the Rights of Man are not
the Rights of Man, and whether
the Rights of Man are not the Rights of Man.



By JOHN

...

...

...

OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
ANSWER to a DISCOURSE
ON THE
QUESTION

*Whether the Re-establishment of Arts and Sciences
hath contributed to the refinement of Manners?*

I OUGHT to return thanks, rather than a reply, to the Author who hath honoured my discourse with an answer. But that which I owe to complaisance, must not cause me to forget the obligations I am under to truth: Neither must I forget, that when a question is referred to reason, men then resume the rights of nature, and take on them their original equality.

The discourse which I have to reply to, is full of things exceeding true, and very well proved,

proved, and to which I cannot find any answer: And altho' they have qualified me with the degree of doctor, I should be sorry to be of the number of those, who have learned to confute every opposer.

My defence will not, on this Account, be the less easy. It shall confine itself to the comparing my sentiment with those truths which are objected to it; for if I prove that they do not at all affect it, that will, I believe, be enough for it's defence.

I may reduce to two principal points, all the propositions established by my adversary. One contains the eulogium of the sciences, the other treats of their abuse. I shall examine them separately.

It would seem by the strain of the answer, that it would have given pleasure, had I spoke worse of the sciences, than in reality I did. It is supposed that the commendation given to them, which is found at the beginning of my discourse, must have been painful to me; it is, according to the author, a confession forced from me by the strength of truth, and which I was not slow in retracting.

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If this confession be a praise forced from me by truth, it must be believed, that I thought as well of the sciences as I spoke. The good therefore that the author himself says of them, is not, then, contrary to my sentiment. This confession, saith he, is torn from me by force; so much the better for my cause; for this shews that truth, with me, is more powerful than inclination. But from whence can it be judged that this praise is forced? Is it because it is badly done? This would be a terrible impeachment to the sincerity of authors, to try it by this new principle. Is it because it is too short? I think I might have said much less in a greater number of pages. But, saith he, I have retracted it; I do not know in what place I have committed this fault; and all I can say in answer, is, that it was not my intention.

Science, is in it self very good; that is evident: And to say the contrary, is to renounce good sense. The author of all things is the fountain of truth. Omniscience is one of his divine attributes. It is then in some sort to participate of the supreme wisdom, to acquire knowledge and to extend the powers of the mind. It is in this sense, that I have given
praise

praise to learning; and it is in this sense that my adversary praises it. It shews itself moreover in the many kinds of uses which man may draw from arts and sciences. I should willingly have said this much, if it had been to my subject; thus, we are perfectly agreed in this point.

But how cometh it to pass that the sciences, so pure in their beginning, and so worthy of praise in their end, are productive of so many impieties, so many heresies, so many errors, so many absurd systems, so many contraries, such childishness, such bitter satyrs, such contemptible romances, such licentious verses, so many obscene books; and in those who cultivate them, so much pride, so much avarice, so many wrangles, so many jealousies, so many lies, so many abuses, so many calumnies, such base and shameful flatteries; I said that it is, because knowledge, beautiful and sublime as it is, is not made for man; that he hath a capacity too limited to make any great progress towards it, and too many passions in the heart, not to make a bad use of it. That it is enough for him to study well his duty, and that every one hath received all the lights he hath need of for this study.

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My adversary acknowledges, on his side, that the sciences become hurtful, when they are abused, and that many in reality do abuse them. In this I do not find what we say to be very different; I add, it is true, that they are very much abused, and that they are constantly abused, and it doth not seem to me, that the answer shews any thing to the contrary.

I might then affirm, that our principles, and, of consequence, all the propositions to be deduced from them, in no respect disagree; and this is what I had to prove. However, when we come to conclude, our inferences will be found very different. Mine was this; since the sciences have more bad effects on the morals of society, than they have good, it were to be wished that men pursued them with less solicitude. That of my adversary is; Altho' the sciences do a great deal of ill, we must not, therefore, forbear to cultivate them, because of the good they do. I refer it, not to the generality of men, but to the small number of true philosophers, which of these conclusions ought to be prefer'd.

It

It is proper for me to make some light observations on certain passages of the answer, which appear to me to want a little of that justice, which I willingly admire in others, and which may have contributed to the fault in the consequence, which the author draw.

The piece begins with some things personal, of which I shall make no account, but as far as they relate to the question. The author honours me with many praises, and that is certainly opening for me a fair field. But these things are not, all of them, well suited: A respectful silence on the objects of our esteem, is often more becoming than indiscreet praise *.

My

* All princes, good and bad, will ever be basely and indiscriminately praised, whilst ever there are courtiers or scholars. As for princes who are great men, their eulogies ought to be more moderate and better chosen. Flattery offends their virtue, and this praise may become all their glory. At least I am certain, that *Trajan* would be much greater in my eyes, if *Pliny* had never wrote. If *Alexander* had really been what he affected to appear, he would never have dreamed of his picture, or of his statue; but for his panegyrick, he would have suffer'd none but a *Laconick* to make it, or take the chance to be without one. The only praise, worthy of a king, is that which will be heard, not from the mouth of a mercenary orator, but from the voice of a free people.

My discourse, say they, hath something surprizing; this, I fancy, requires to be explained; (a) again, they wonder that it carried the prize. It is not at all wonderful, that an indifferent performance should have success. In every other sense, this surprize does as much honour to the academy of *Dijon*, as it is injurious to the integrity of academies in general; and it is easy to perceive, what advantage I can make of it, when favourable to my cause.

They charge me, in expressions very agreeably disposed, with contradiction between my conduct and my doctrine; they reproach me with having cultivated myself, those studies which I condemn; (b) since learning

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(a) It is at the question itself that they may be surprized: A great and fine question as ever was, and which might not be expected to be so soon renewed. The *French* academy have proposed for the prize of eloquence for the year 1752, a subject very like the present. They are to maintain, *That the love of learning inspires the love of virtue*. The academy did not think it convenient to let such a subject be handled as a problem; and this learned society have, on this occasion, doubled the time they used to give, even on the most difficult subjects.

(b) I cannot justify myself, like many others, by saying, that our education doth not depend on ourselves, and that we are not consulted when we are poisoned:

and virtue are incompatible, as they pretend I obliged myself to prove, they ask me, with a very peremptory air, how I dare to employ the one, when I declare myself for the other?

It required some share of management thus to entangle *me* in the question ; this personality cannot fail to throw some embarrassment into my answers, for unfortunately I have more than one to make. Let us try, at least, if justness can supply the want of ornament.

The cultivation of the sciences corrupts the morals of a people. It is this that I have dared to advance ; it is this that I dare believe I have proved. But how can I say that in every particular man, the sciences and virtue are incompatible ; I, who have exhorted princes to invite those who are really learned to their courts, and to place confidence in them, that experiment may be made, of what the sciences united to virtue, might be able to perform for the advantage of human kind.

The

poisoned : It was with exceeding good-will that I threw myself into study, and it is with better that I have abandoned it ; perceiving the trouble into which it cast my mind, without any benefit to my reason. I would have no more to do with a deceitful employment, wherein much is promised to be done for wisdom, in doing all for vanity.

The really learned are very few in number, I confess; for it requires great talents and great virtues to qualify for the right application of the sciences. Now this is what is hardly to be hoped for, even from distinguished geniuses, and is not at all to be expected from an entire people. It cannot then be inferred from my principles, that a particular man may not be learned and virtuous at the same time.

To press me with this pretended contradiction, even did it really exist, might have been spared. I adore virtue, my heart bears me witness of it; it tells me besides, that this love of virtue, is very wide from the practice of it, which is what constitutes a virtuous man; and yet I am very far from being a learned man, and further still from the affectation of it. I might have thought that this free confession, which I made at the beginning of my discourse, would have warranted me from this imputation; I rather feared that I should be accused of taking on me to judge of things to which I was a stranger. It may readily be observed how impossible it was, that I should avoid one or other of these reproaches. How can I tell but they may unite

nite them, if I do not hasten to obviate the present, however little it may be worth the pains?

I might apply to this subject, what the fathers of the church have said concerning worldly knowledge, which they despised, and notwithstanding made use of it to combat the heathen philosophers. I might cite the comparison which they make of it, with the furniture of the *Egyptians*, stolen by the *Israelites*; but I shall content myself wholly for answer, to propose this question: If a man should come to kill me, and I should have the good fortune to seize his weapon, should I be hindered before I lay it down, to make use of it to drive him out of my house.

If the contradiction they reproach me with, doth not exist; it is not necessary to suppose, that I only undertook to divert myself with a frivolous paradox; and it appears to me the less necessary, as the strain I used, however bad it might be, at least, is not such as is commonly employed in waggery.

It is time to have done with what relates to myself. No one is a gainer by speaking of

of himself; and it is an indiscretion which the publick is slow to forgive, even when one is forced to it. Truth is so independent of those who attack it, and of those who defend it, that authors who contend concerning it, ought reciprocally to forget each other. This would save a great deal of ink and paper. But this rule, so easy to be practised by me, is not at all to the mind of my adversary, and this difference is to the disadvantage of my reply.

The author observing that I attack the arts and sciences in their effect on morals, employs to answer me, a detail of the utilities which may on all occasions be drawn from them; this is, as if to justify a person accused, it would be sufficient to prove that he is in good health, that he is an ingenious man, or that he is very rich. Provided they agree with me, that the arts and sciences render us bad people, I shall not controvert, but that they are otherwise very commodious; and the more they are so, the more they are on equality with many vices.

The author goes further, and pretends still that study is necessary for us to perceive
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the beauty of the universe ; and that nature, revealed as an object to the eyes of all, for the instruction of the simple, requires, it seems, much learning in the observer to be perceived. I confess this assertion surprises me. Is it that all men are bound to be philosophers, or is it so ordered, that none but philosophers may believe in God. The scripture exhorts us in a thousand places, to adore the greatness and goodness of God, in the wonders of his works ; I do not think that it hath any where prescribed to us, that we should study physicks ; nor that the author of nature should be less adored by me, who know nothing, than by him who knew the Cedar and the Hyssop, the probosces of a Fly, and that of an Elephant.

They ever think that they have shewn what the sciences do, when all they have done is to tell what they ought to do. This however, appears to me very different : The contemplation or study of the universe ought to raise the mind of man towards its creator, that I know ; yet it serves only to raise human vanity. The philosopher, who flatters himself that he penetrates the secrets of God, dares to associate his pretended wisdom, with
wisdom

wisdom eternal: He approves, he blames, he corrects, he prescribes laws to nature; and whilst busied with his empty systems, he takes a multitude of pains in arranging the machine of the world. The labourer who sees the rain and sun, by turns fertilise his field, admires, praises, and blesses the hand from whence he has these benefits, without troubling his head with the manner in which they are bestowed. He seeks not to justify his ignorance or his vices, by incredulity. He censures not the workmanship of God, nor affronts his master to display his own sufficiency. That impious expression of *Alphonso*, X. never came into the head of one of the vulgar: It was for the mouth of a philosopher, that this blasphemy was reserved.

That curiosity natural to man, say they, inspires him with a desire to learn. He ought then to endeavour to curb it, as well as the rest of his natural dispositions. *His occasions make him feel the NECESSITY.* In many respects knowledge is useful, however savages are men, and yet feel not this NECESSITY. *His employments lay on him the obligation.* They more frequently oblige him to lay aside his

his study, and attend his business (c). *He finds pleasure in the progress of it.* For that reason he ought to suspect it. *His first discoveries encrease his appetite of knowledge.* This, indeed, doth happen with those who have talents. *The more he knows, the more he finds that he hath knowledge to acquire.* That is to say, throwing away of time, being become an habit, it excites him still to throw away more: But it is only to a very few, even men of genius, that by means of learning, a view of ignorance is disclosed; and it is to them alone, that study can be of any use. Scarce hath a little mind apprehended something, but immediately it conceits itself to comprehend all. There is not any kind of foolishness which this perswasion doth not make them say and do. *The more knowledge is acquired, the more facility we find in doing well.* One may see by this manner of speaking, that the author hath consulted his own heart, rather than made observations on men.

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(c) It is a bad mark for a society, when it requires much learning in those who compose it. If men were what they ought to be, there would be little need of study to teach them what they ought to do.

He advances yet, that it is good to know evil, to learn to shun it; and he gives to understand, that virtue is not to be depended on, till it hath been put to trial. These maxims are at least doubtful, and subject to many discussions. It is not certain, that to know how to do well, people are obliged to know how many ways there are of doing ill. We have a guide within, much more infallible than books, and which never will be wanting when there is occasion. We shall find it sufficient to conduct us with innocence, if we constantly give it attention; and how can it be, that we are under necessity to make trial of our strength, in order to be assured of our virtue, when it is one of the exercises of virtue, to shun the occasion of vice.

A wise man is ever on his guard, and ever diffident of his own strength; he keeps his courage in reserve for a proper occasion, and never unnecessarily exposes himself. The bully, is he who is ever boasting of what he cannot do, and who, after having braved and insulted all the World, suffers himself to be beaten on the first rencounter. I would desire to know, which of these two pictures best

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resembles

resembles the philosopher on a clear Stage with his passions.

I am reproached with having affected to bring my examples of virtue from among the antients. There is great appearance that I should have found still more, had I gone yet higher. I did cite one modern people, and it is not my fault that I found but one. I am again reproached in a general way, with odious parallels, which, they say, contain less zeal and equity, than envy to my countrymen, and humour against my cotemporaries. Nevertheless, no person, perhaps, loves his country so well, or his country-men, as I. To this I have but one word to answer. I have given my reasons, and it is them that are to be weighed; as to my intentions, judgment of them must be left to him, to whom it doth appertain.

I ought not to pass over in silence, here, a considerable objection which hath been made to me by a philosopher. *Is it not to the climate, to the temperament, to the fault of chance, to the fault of the object, to the economy of government, to customs, to laws, to any other cause than to the sciences, that*
ought

ought to be attributed, this difference which we some times observe in the manners of different times, and different countries?

This Question contains great matter, and requires explanations of too much extent, to be suited to the present writing. Besides, it calls for the examination of several incidents, exceeding dark, tho' very real, which are found in the nature of government; the genius, the manners, the learning of a people; and this would throw me into nice discussions, which might lead me too far. Besides, it would be hard for me to speak of government, without giving my adversary too wide a field; and every thing well weighed, these researches are not over proper to be made at Geneva, and in some other circumstances.

I proceed to an accusation of much greater weight than the foregoing objection. I shall transcribe it, in its proper terms; for it is necessary to lay it faithfully before the eyes of the reader.

The more a christian examines the firmness of his title, the more he will be assured of the possession of his belief; the more he studies

reve-

revelation, the more he will fortify himself in faith. It is in the Divine writings, that he discovers the origine and excellence of it; it is in the learned writings of the fathers of the church, that he follows it, unfolding it from age to age; it is in books of piety and church history, that he finds examples and matter for application.

What! Shall ignorance ravish from religion and virtue such powerful supports! And shall it be, that a Doctor of Geneva, shall openly teach that irregularity of manners is owing to this! We would be more astonished to hear so strange a paradox, if we did not know that the singularity of a system, how dangerous soever it be, is but a further reason to have no other rule, but a particular turn of mind.

I dare question this author, how he could ever give a like interpretation to the principles I have established? How he could accuse me of blaming the study of religion: I, who blame the study of our vain sciences, chiefly because they turn us aside from our duty? And what then is the study of the duty

duty of a christian, if it be not that of his religion itself?

Without doubt, I had a right to blame all those boyish subtelties of the schools, with which, under pretence of explaining the principles of religion, they have destroyed its spirit, in substituting learned pride in the place of christian humility. I had a right to raise myself with more force against those rash ministers, who dared first to lay an hand on the ark, to uphold with their feeble learning, a structure supported by the hand of God. I was right to condemn those triflers, who with their miserable punctualities have debased the sublime simplicity of the gospel, and reduced to syllogisms, the doctrine of Jesus Christ. But my present business is to defend, and not to attack.

I see that it is by history and facts that I must put an end to this dispute. If I can shew in a few words, that the sciences and religion had very little intercourse in the beginning, perhaps that may serve to decide the question on this point.

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The people whom God chose to himself, never improv'd the sciences, and study was never recommended to them ; and yet if this study was good for any thing, they had as much occasion for it as any other. On the contrary, their leaders did their utmost to keep them separate, as much as possible, from the idolitrous and learned nations who surrrounded them. A precaution less necessary for them on one account, than the other ; for these weak, dull people, were much easier to be seduced by the knaveries of the priests of Baal, than by the sophisms of Philosophers.

After their frequent dispersions amongst the *Egyptians* and *Greeks*, science had yet great pain to take root in the heads of the *Hebrews*. *Josephus* and *Philo*, who any where else would be of small esteem, were prodigies among them. The *Sadduces*, owing to their irreligion, were the philosophers of *Jerusalem*. The *Pharasees*, grand Hypocrites, were its doctors. (d) These, tho' they

(d) The same hatred and reciprocal contempt was to be seen between those two parties, which reign at all times between doctors and philosophers ; that is to say, between those who make a lumber-house of their heads,
for

they almost confined their knowledge to the study of the law, did it with the greatest ostentation, and dogmatick sufficiency; they observed with the utmost exactness, the practice of religion; but the gospel acquaints us with the spirit of this exactness, and the account we ought to make of it. Besides, they, all of them, had very little learning, and a great deal of pride, and it is not in that they differ most from the doctors of this day.

On the establishment of the new law, it was not to the learned that Jesus Christ would entrust his doctrine and his Ministry. He followed in his choice, the approbation he shewed, on every occasion, of the low and simple. And in the instructions which he gave to his disciples, we do not find one word either of study or science, if it be not to shew the contempt he had of all such things.

After for the knowledge of others, and those who would be thought to have it of their own. Set by the ears the musick-master and the dancing-master of the Bourgeois Gentilhomme [Comedy of *Moliere*] you will there have the antiquary and the wit; the chymist and the man of letters; the lawyer and the physician; the geometer and the versifyer; the divine and the philosopher; to judge properly of all these people, it suffices to set them in opposition to each other, and to hear what each of them says, not of himself, but of others.

After the death of Jesus Christ, twelve poor fishers and artificers, undertook to instruct and convert the world. Their method was plain, they preached without art, but with a bosom penetrated; and of all the miracles with which God honoured their faith, that which was the most striking, was the sanctity of their lives; their disciples followed this example, and the success was prodigious. The pagan priests alarmed, made princes believe that the state was undone, because the offerings became few. Persecutions arose, and the persecutors only promoted the progress of the religion they meant to smother. All the christians ran to martyrdom, and all the people ran to baptism. The History of these first times is one continued prodigy.

The idolatrous priests, however, not content with persecuting the christians, betook themselves to calumny. The philosophers, who found not their account in a religion which taught humility, joined themselves to the priests. Scoffs and injuries showered from all parts on the new sect. It was necessary to take up the pen in its defence.

Saint

Saint *Justin* martyr (e) first wrote an apology.

(e) These first writers, who sealed with their blood the testimony of their pen, would be very scandalous writers at this day ; for they avowed, precisely, the same sentiment with me. Saint *Justin*, in his debate with *Trypho*, passes in review, the several sects of Philosophy he had before made tryal of, and makes them appear so ridiculous, that one would think they were reading a dialogue of *Lucian*. We see also, in *Tertullian's* apology, how much the first christians took themselves to be affronted, when they were thought to be philosophers.

It would indeed be a very irksome recital to philosophy, to expose the pernicious maxims and impious tenets of many of its sects. The *Epicureans* absolutely denied a providence ; the *Academicks* doubted the existence of God ; and the *Stoicks* of the immortality of the soul. Those sects less celebrated, had opinions nothing better. Let us take a sample of them, in those of *Theodorus*, chief of one of the two branches of the *Cyrenaicks*, given us by *Diogenes Laertius*. *Sustulit amicitiam quod ea neque insipientibus neque sapientibus adsit*——*probabile dicebat prudentem virum non seipsum propatriâ periculis exponere, neque enim pro insipientium commodis amittendam esse prudentiam. Furto quoque & adulterio & sacrilegio, cum tempestivum erit, daturum operam sapientem. Nihil quippe horum turpe naturâ esse. Sed auferatur de hisce vulgaris opinio, quæ è stultorum imperitorumque plebeculâ conflata est*——*sapientem publicè absque ullo pudore ac suspitione scortis congressurum.*

These opinions are, I know, particular ; but is there any one of all the sects, which hath not fallen into some dangerous error ; and what shall we say of that distinction of two doctrines, so greedily received by all the Philosophers, by help of which they held in secret, senti-
ments

gy for his faith. They attack'd the pagans in their turn. To attack them, was to vanquish. The success of the first writers gave encouragement to others: Under pretence of exposing the turpitude of paganism, they threw themselves into mythology and erudition: (f) They must shew their learning

ments quite opposite to those they publicly taught? *Pythagoras* was the first who made use of the doctrine of interials; he discovered it not to his disciples, till after long tryals, and with the greatest mystery; he gave them privately lessons of atheism, and solemnly offered hecatombs to *Jupiter*. The philosophers approved so well of this method, that it spread itself rapidly in *Greece*, and from thence to *Rome*; as appears by the writings of *Cicero*, who laughed with his friends, at the immortal Gods, whom he invoked with so much emphasis, on the tribunal of harangues.

This doctrine of interials was not conveyed from *Europe* into *China*, but had its birth there along with philosophy: And, it is to this, the *Chinese* are indebted for the crowd of atheists or philosophers they have among them. The history of this fatal doctrine, done by a knowing and sincere man, would be a terrible stroke given to philosophy, both antient and modern. But philosophy will hold in defiance, reason, truth, and even time, because it hath its source in human pride, more powerful than all these.

(f) *Clemens Alexandrinus* hath been justly reproached with having affected prophane erudition, not become a christian, in his writings. However, it might be excusable at that time, that he should acquaint himself

ing and their wit, books appeared in crowds, and morals began to give ground.

In a little time they were no more contented with the simplicity of the gospel, and the faith of the apostles, every one must have more wit than his predecessor. They subtilised every tenet, every one must support his opinion, no one would yield. The ambition to be the head of a sect prevailed, and heresies sprung up in all parts.

Wrath and violence did not delay to join in the dispute. Those christians so mild, who thought nothing but to hold out the throat to the knife, became to one another, furious persecutors, worse than the idolators; all went into the same excess, and the cause of truth was not sustained with more moderation, than that of falsehood.

Another evil, still more dangerous, had birth from the same source. That is, the in-

self with those doctrines, he was to defend himself against. But who can forbear smiling at the great pains taken by the learned at this day, to explain the whimsies of mythology.

introducing the antient philosophy, into the doctrine of christianity. In studying the *Greek* philosophers, they imagined that they found something conformable to christianity. They dared to think religion would be more respected, equipt with the authority of philosophy. There was a time when to be orthodox, one must study *Plato*; and it was within a little, that *Plato*, at one time, and *Aristotle* at another, was not placed at the altar, side by side with Jesus Christ.

The church did more than once exert itself against this abuse. Its most illustrious defenders often deplored it, in terms full of strength and energy. They often attempted to banish all wordly science, which soiled its purity. One of the most illustrious popes came even to that excess of zeal, as to declare, that it was a shameful thing, to subject the word of God to the rules of grammar.

But they found it vain to exclaim. Drawn down by the torrent, they were constrained to conform themselves to the custom they condemned; and it was in a very

very learned way, that the greater part of them declaimed against the progress of the sciences.

After long agitation, things at length took a more settled posture. Towards the tenth century, the lamp of the sciences ceased to enlighten the earth; the clergy remained plunged in an ignorance which I will not justify, because it fell no less on the things which they ought to know, than on those which were useless; but the church thereby obtained at least a repose, which, till then, it was unacquainted with.

After the revival of letters, divisions immediately began anew, with more violence than ever. Learned men stirred up the quarrel, learned men maintained it; and the most learned, ever shewed themselves the most obstinate. Conferences of the doctors of different parties were held in vain: neither of them brought a desire of reconciliation, nor, probably, of the truth; all brought a desire of shining at the expence of his adversary; none would be instructed; the strong put the weak to silence; the dispute
ever

ever ended in railing, and persecution was always the fruit. God only knows, when these evils will have an end.

The sciences at present flourish, literature and arts shine among us; what advantage doth religion obtain from this? Put this question to the multitude of philosophers, who pride themselves in having no religion. Our libraries spew up their books of divinity, and the casuists grow mouldy amongst us. Knowledge expands itself, and at the same time evaporates. Every one would teach to do well, and not a soul will learn; we are all become doctors, and we have ceased to be christians.

No, it is not with so much art and equipage that the gospel hath extended itself throughout the universe, and that its ravishing beauties have penetrated the heart. That divine book, the only one necessary to a christian, and the most useful, even to those who put not faith in it, needs only to be meditated on, to convey into the soul, the love of its author, and a desire to accomplish his precepts. Virtue
never

never spoke in so mild language. The most profound wisdom never expressed itself with such energy and simplicity. One never leaves the reading of it, but he finds himself the better. O ye ministers of that law therein revealed to me, give yourselves less pains to inform me of trifles, lay aside all your learned books, which neither can convince or teach me. Prostrate yourselves at the feet of this God of mercy, who employs you, to make me fear and love him; pray to him for that humility in yourselves, which it is your duty to preach to me; spread not out before me, that haughty science, that indecent pomp, which dishonours you, and disgusts me; be moved yourselves, if you would have me to be so; but above all things, shew me in your conduct, the practice of that law, in which you pretend to instruct me. You have no occasion to know more, nor to instruct me further; your ministry is accomplished. There is not any question in all this, concerning polite learning, nor philosophy. This is what is required in following and in preaching the gospel, and it is thus the first defenders of it, made it triumph over all the world,

world, *non Aristotelico more*, said the fathers of the church, *sed Piscatorio*.

I find I am become tedious, but I thought I could not excuse myself from expatiating a little on a point so important as this, besides, the impatient reader must consider, that the critick hath great advantage, for he may attack with a single word, when it will require whole pages to defend.

I proceed to the second part of the answer, on which I shall endeavour to be more short, tho' I find I have no fewer observations to make.

It is not owing to the sciences, say they, it is from the womb of abundance, that sloath and luxury have their birth. Neither do I say, that the sciences produce luxury; but that they had their birth together, and that the one scarce ever goes without the other. Observe how I dispose this geneology. The first source of evil is inequality; and from inequality is derived wealth; for these words, *rich* and *poor* are relatives, and wherever men are equal, there is neither rich nor poor.
From

From wealth are born luxury and sloath ; luxury brings forth polite arts, and sloath the sciences. *Riches are seldom found to be the portion of the learned.* This renders the evil still the greater. The rich and the learned serve mutually to corrupt each other. If the rich were more learned, or the learned more rich, the one would not be such mean flatterers, and the other would love base flattery the less, and both would be better. This may be observed by the small number who have the good fortune to be rich and learned at the same time. *For one Plato in opulency, for one Aristippus respected at court, how many philosophers are reduced to a cloak and a wallet ; wrapt up in their own virtue, and unknown in their solitude ?* I do not dispute, but that there are a great many philosophers very poor, and who are undoubtedly, vexed that they are so : Neither do I doubt, but that it is owing to their poverty, that the greater number of them are philosophers. But when I would most willingly suppose them virtuous, is it by virtues concealed from their eyes, that people are to regulate their morals ? *The learned have neither relish nor leisure to heap up great riches.* I am willing to agree, that

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they have not leisure. *They love study.* He who doth not love what he betakes himself to, is either very silly, or very miserable. *They live in low condition.* They must be much disposed in their favour, who allow of that as a merit. *A life, laborious and moderate, passed in the silence of retreat, employed in labour and study, certainly is not a voluptuous and blameable life.* No indeed, at least in the eyes of men: It all together depends on the will. A man may be constrained to lead such a life, and have a mind, notwithstanding, greatly corrupted; but after all, what doth it signify, tho' he be himself virtuous and modest, if the way in which he employs himself, confirms his own sloath, and hurts the minds of his neighbours? *The conveniencies of life, tho' commonly the fruit of arts, are never the more the share of the artists.* It doth not appear to me, that they are people who would reject them; especially as those who employ themselves in arts, totally useless, and consequently very gainful, are most in condition to procure what they desire. *They labour entirely for the rich.* As things go on, I shall not be surpris'd to see the rich labour

labour for them. *And it is the lazy rich, who profit by and abuse the fruits of their industry.* Once again, I do not see that those artists, are folks so very simple and modest; luxury cannot well be predominant in one order of citizens, without gliding into all the others, under different modifications, and every where makes a like ravage.

Luxury corrupts all; the rich, who enjoy it, and the poor, who covet it. I do not say, that it is an evil in itself to wear lace, ruffles, embroidered cloaths, and to shew an enammel'd snuff-box; but it is a very great one, to make a merit of such gayities, to count those happy who carry them, and to devote that time and those pains to acquire the like, which all men owe to more worthy purposes. I have no need to be told what is the employment of those who engage themselves in such pursuits, to know what opinion I ought to form of them.

I pass over the fine picture that is here given us of the learned-man, and I think I may make a merit of this complaisance. My
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adversary is not so indulgent: He not only will not grant me any thing he can deny, but rather than condemn the evil, which I think of our vain and false politeness, he chuses to be an advocate for hypocrisy. He asks me, if I would have vice shew itself barefaced? Affuredly I would. Confidence and esteem would arise amongst the good, they would learn to distrust the bad, and society would by that means be better established: I would chuse that my enemy would attack me with open force, rather than come treacherously and strike me behind. What then! would I join scandal to the crime? I cannot tell; but I would be glad that deceit was not added to it. Those maxims given out, for some time past, concerning scandals, happen to be very commodious for the vicious: To follow them to the rigour, we must suffer our selves to be robb'd, cheated, murdered with impunity, and never punish any; for it is a most scandalous sight to see a fellow at the gallows. But, hypocrisy is an homage which vice pays to virtue? Yes, like that of the assassins of *Cesar*, who prostrated themselves at his feet, to murder him more surely. This thought
may

may be very sparkling, and may be well received, thro' the celebrated name of its author; however, it is not just. Was it ever said of a thief, who should put on the livery of the family the better to play his part, that he did homage to the master of the house? No, to cover wickedness with the dangerous cloak of hypocrisy, is doing no honour to virtue, it is rather an injury to prophane her banners; it is to add cowardice and deceit, to all other vices; it is to shut up for ever all return to probity. There are elevated characters, who shew out even in crimes, I know not what of bold and generous, who discover within some sparks of that divine fire, form'd to animate great souls. But the vile, creeping soul of the hypocrite, is like a carcass without fire, or warmth, or any remains of life. I appeal to experience. There have been known very great villains to look into themselves, and their course piously, and die devoutly. But that which no one ever saw, is an hypocrite become honest; one might reasonably attempt the conversion of *Cartouch*, but no one in their senses

senses would ever undertake that of Crom-
wel.

I have attributed to the re-establishment of letters and arts, that elegance and politeness which appear in our manners. The author of the answer disputes this, and I wonder at it: For since he reckons so much on politeness, and so much on the sciences, I cannot perceive the advantage it will be to him, to deprive one of these things of the honour of having produced the other. But let us examine his proofs: They may be reduced to this. *We do not find that learned men are more polite than others; on the contrary, they are often less so; therefore, our politeness is not the work of the sciences.*

I have observed already, that we are now, not so much upon the sciences, as upon literature, polite arts, and works of taste; and our wits, as little learned as you please, but so polite, so open, so brilliant, such pretty gentlemen, will hardly know themselves in the slovenly, pedantick air,
which

which the author of the answer would give them. But, laying aside what hath been said, let us agree, since it must be so, that the learned, the poets and the wits, are all alike ridiculous; that the gentlemen of the academy of *Belles-Lettres*, of the academy of Sciences, of the *French* academy, are very dull fellows, that they know neither the air nor the fashion of the world, and are therefore shut out from good company; the author will gain little by that, and will not have the more right to deny, that the politeness and urbanity which reign amongst us, are the effects of good taste, drawn up among the antients, and spread abroad among the people of *Europe*, by the agreeable books they have published concerning it in all parts. As the best dancing masters are not always those who present themselves the best, a man may give very good lessons of politeness, without being extremely polite himself. Those heavy commentators, who, they tell us, are acquainted with every thing in the antients, but their grace and delicacy, have not failed, by their useful, tho' despised works,

to

to teach us to apprehend those beauties, which they felt not themselves. The same may be said of those embellishments of conversation, of this elegance of manners, which takes the place of sincerity, and which is to be remarked among all people where letters have been had in honour; at *Athens*, at *Rome*, in *China*, every where we see politeness; language and ceremony always accompany, not the learned and the artists, but the sciences and the arts.

The next attack the author makes, is on the praises I have given to ignorance; he accuses me with having spoke, more like an orator than a philosopher. He paints ignorance in his turn, and we need not doubt but he dresses it in pretty colours.

I do not deny but he hath reason, yet I do not think that I am to blame. It requires only a distinction, very true and very just, to reconcile us.

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There is an untractable and brutal ignorance (*h*), which rises from a bad heart and a false judgment; a criminal ignorance which extends itself even to the duties of humanity; which multiplies vices, which degrades reason, debases the soul, and renders men no better than beasts. This is the ignorance which the author attacks, and of which he gives a very odious picture, and of great resemblance. There is another sort of ignorance, which is rational, and consists in limiting curiosity, to the extent of those faculties which we have received; a modest ignorance, which hath its rise from a lively love of virtue, and which excites an indifference to every thing that is not worthy of the heart of man, and

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(*h*) I shall not wonder if some one of my critics, takes advantage of the praises I have given to some people, ignorant and virtuous; and oppose to me a list of all these troops of banditti, who have infested the earth, and who, doubtless, were not generally the most learned men. I recommend to them before-hand, not to take the trouble of this enquiry, further than as it may serve to shew their own erudition. If I had said, that to be virtuous required no more but to be ignorant, it would not be worth the pains to answer me, and for that reason I dispence with myself from answering those who shall lose their time in asserting the contrary.

which doth not contribute to make it better; an easy and esteemable ignorance; the treasure of an uncorrupted mind, contented in itself; which places all its happiness in returning into itself; in bearing witness of its own innocence, and which hath no need to seek a vain and false felicity, in the opinion which others may have of its qualifications. This is the ignorance which I have praised, and is what I request of heaven to bestow in punishment of the scandal which I caused to the learned, thro' my avowed contempt for the human sciences.

Let us compare, saith the author, to those times of ignorance and barbarism, those happy ages, when the sciences have expanded throughout, a spirit of order and justice. These happy ages will be very hard to find; but it may be very easily found, thanks to the sciences, that order and justice, are no longer but empty names; contrived to impose on the people, and that their appearances hath been with care preserved, the more effectually to destroy them with impunity. In our days we see that wars are less frequent and more just. In what

what time soever it be, how can war be more just on one side, without being more unjust on the other? This I cannot conceive! *Actions less astonishing but more heroick.* Certainly no body will dispute with my adversary his right of judging concerning heroism, but doth he think, that that which is not astonishing to him, may not be otherwise to us? *Victories less bloody, but more glorious; conquests less sudden, but more assured; warriors less violent, but more resolute, knowing how to conquer with moderation, treating the conquered with humanity; honour is their guide, glory is their reward.* I shall grant to the author, that there are very great men amongst us; it is very easy for him to furnish proofs of this: That doth not imply, but that the people are greatly corrupted; but for any thing more, these things are so vague, that the same may be said almost of all ages; and it is impossible to answer it without turning over whole libraries, and writing in folio, to establish proofs to the contrary.

When *Socrates* ill-treated the sciences, he could not, it seems, have his eye on either the pride of the *Stoicks*, the indolence of the

the *Epicureans*, or the absurd jargon of the *Pyrhonians*, because not one of all these gentry were in being in his time. But this slight anacronism is no way unbecoming in my adversary. He hath better employed his time than in determining dates, and is no more obliged to have his *Diogenes Laertius* by heart, than I am to enter into disputes.

I agree then, that *Socrates* aimed at nothing more than reprovng the vices of the philosophers of his time; but I can conclude no other from this, than that in his time, vices sprung up along with philosophers. To this I am answered, that it is the abuse of philosophy. I do not think I said the contrary. *What! every thing, then, must be suppress'd that is abused?* Yes, doubtless, answer I, without hesitation: Every thing that is useless, every thing that the abuse of it doth more hurt, than the use doth good.

Let us stop a while, and consider of this last consequence, and let us beware of concluding that we ought at this day to
burn

burn all the libraries, and destroy the universities and academies. We should only again plunge *Europe* into barbarism, and morals would still be no gainer, * It is with grief that I am about to pronounce a great and fatal truth. There is but one step between knowledge and ignorance, and the removing from the one to the other, is common in nations; but it hath never been seen, that a people once corrupted, return to virtue. We pretend in vain to destroy the root of evil; in vain we would lead back men to their first equality, that preserver of innocence and source of all virtue: Their hearts once spoiled, will be so for ever; there is no remedy, without some great revolution, almost as much to be dreaded as the evil it might remedy, and which it is blameable to desire, and impossible to foresee.

Let us, then, leave the arts and sciences to mellow the ferocity of man, which they have

* *Vices remain amongst us, saith the philosopher I have already quoted, and we have ignorance no longer.* By the few lines which this author hath wrote on this great subject, we may see that he turned his eyes this way, but hath overlook'd it.

have corrupted ; let us seek for some prudent diversion, and try to give a turn to their passions. Let us throw some scraps to those tygers, that they may not devour our children. A bad man's knowledge is less to be feared, than his brutal stupidity ; it makes him at least more circumspect in the mischief he can do, by what he finds he receives from it himself.

I praised academies and their illustrious founders, and I willingly repeat it again. When the distemper is incureable, the physician applies palliatives, and proportions his remedies, less to the occasions than to the constitutions of the sick. It concerns wise legislators to immitate his prudence, and it being impossible for them to accommodate that policy, which is the most excellent, to their patients, to order them, like *Solon*, the best they will conform to.

There is in *Europe* a great prince, and what is much more a virtuous citizen, who, in the country which he hath adopted, and which he renders happy, hath formed many institutions in favour of learning. In doing

ing so, he hath done what was worthy of his wisdom and his virtue. When the establishing of politicks is the question, then is the time to decide of all. It is for their own interests that princes favour arts and sciences; I have given the reason of it: And in the present state of things, they must be favoured for the Interest of the people too. If we actually had a king amongst us, narrow enough to think and act otherwise, his subjects would remain poor and ignorant, and would be never the less vicious. But my adversary hath neglected to take example of an example so obvious, and in appearance so favourable to his cause; perhaps he is the only one who knows not, or did not think of it: Let him permit us to put him in mind of it, that he may not refuse the praises which are due to great things, that he may admire them as we do, and not hold himself so firmly against the truths which he attacks.

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